1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1948)1960
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The above brief sketch of the village ceremonies is perhaps sufficient to demonstrate the religious character of this aspect of *desa* community life. I may be permitted to end with a quotation from Korn on the Balinese of Tĕnganan:

> That so few [legal measures] are needed is the result of the very remarkable upbringing which causes every Tĕngananese to realize from his earliest years that he is nothing but a part of the religious village community, and that belonging to it is at the same time the greatest bliss that a mortal can share ...[58]

*Singaraja, August–September, 1934*

4:Belo E-5 (1931-1939) 1949 OF7 Bali OF7



Bateson puts it, the *Barong* clears space.[1] He is thought of as King of the Demons, and he alone can keep them under control.

Witchlike spirits (*lějak*), on the other hand, are under the power of the Queen of the Witches, *Rangda*, another sacred mask, which is played by one man. In the temples this mask is often set up on or near a shrine, is given offerings, and if someone goes into trance may be put on and danced as a godly impersonation of this Evil Female. Late at night she will call her "followers," the *lějaks*, who come at her bidding to perform all sorts of horrors, dig up corpses, eat babies, bring pestilence and famine to the village. Only by propitiating her—and perhaps the enacting of the part serves as an acknowledgement of her power—can these evil and more earthly powers be held in check.

The Balinese dramatize these two aggressive and destructive forces, that of the rough, greedy, quarrelsome demons and that of the uncanny, devouring, deathly *lějaks*, by the mask play in which the *Barong* and *Rangda* appear as antagonists. The battle is enacted and reenacted. No one ever wins. What happens is that dozens of villagers, aroused by the excitement held incarnate in these two figures and by the stylized interplay between them, go into trance, go through patterned behavior in a somnambulistic state, attack the Witch with their krisses, are revived by the *Barong*, attack their own chests with their krisses, and preferably work themselves to a climax, a true convulsive seizure of hysterical order. After such a performance everyone goes home feeling perfectly great and at peace with the world.

There can be no doubt that certain tensions and anxieties set up in the Balinese by the restraints, the fears, and the general inhibitory patterning of their emotional life are relieved by these outbursts.[2] Bateson and Mead in their analysis of Balinese character go a step further, relating the specific trance performances described here to early child training, seeing in the *Barong* a father image, in the *Rangda* the image of the teasing, unsatisfying mother, and in the convulsive seizure a repetition of infantile tantrums. Their theory is open to challenge if it is seen as offering the key to the whole of Balinese character structure. In any case, we can bear it in mind for it is certainly thought provoking, though not likely to be understood by those without some training in psychoanalytic theory as well as in cultural anthropology.

*Age Grading.* The division into age grades is not that frequently found in primitive societies but tends to be rather as follows.

[1] Bateson and Mead, 1942, p. 188.
[2] Belo, 1935, pp. 143-144.

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through them, may be of interest because of the foreignness of the setting, of the society in which they are made. My method will consist in an enumeration of a series of patterns of behavior, beginning with the simplest, which give to the outsider his initial impression. The simplest passages of behavior differ from our own no less than do the highly complex thought mechanisms, so closely interlocked with them. Ordinary behavior, the way of walking, of sitting, of greeting acquaintances, of taking nourishment, speech-habits, gesture, and facial expression, all these differ from our own, and all are founded not only on the way of life, but on the people's conception of it, and of the place of the individual in relation to it. And conversely, the higher concepts are built up out of component units, the simpler habits of ordinary behavior. In a discussion of the Balinese temper we shall have to consider both phases, and we shall find them often interdependent and inseparable.

## Bearing and Pace

To a Westerner, the most striking characteristic in the ordinary behavior of a Balinese is the absolute poise and balance of his bearing, noticeable in his posture, his walk, his slightest gesture. All mature men and women have this poise, and even the small children develop it with remarkable rapidity. Almost never does one see a stooped or curving back even among the old people, and clumsiness and lack of coördination are rare. The impression is that of a nation favored with an unusually fine physique, with natural dignity and ease in every motion. But together with the impression of ease, one remarks a sort of *carefulness* in the bearing, as if each foot were placed in its appointed place, each turn of the head or flick of the wrist calculated not to disturb an equilibrium delicately set up, and hanging somewhere unseen within the individual. One learns that the Balinese is never unconscious of his position in space, in relation to *kadja*,[1] North, which is the direction of the mountains, and *kelod*, South, the direction of the sea; and in relation to his position above the ground, which should not be higher than that of his social superior.

[1] The mountains which form the central part of the island are conceived as the abode of the gods, and the highest and most holy place. The sea is by contrast the lowest place, and although there is also a god of the sea, the sea and the seashore are conceived as unholy, and all that is filthy must be cast there, or into the rivers which carry their own filth down to the sea. As the present observations were made in South Bali, for the sake of convenience *kadja* is translated North and *kelod* South. On the other side of the mountains, in North Bali, *kadja* means South, and *kelod* North, since the relative position of the inhabitants to the mountains is reversed. *Kangin*, East, and *kauh*, West, remain the same in both localities.

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superior. It would seem that a great deal of the "carefulness" in the manner of the Balinese springs from his habit of adjusting his position according to the laws of his cosmology and his social group. The other great factor is the habitual avoidance of any impulsive movement which could shock or otherwise momentarily disturb the feeling of well-being in the body.

The individual Balinese moves slowly, with deliberation. Westerners, seeing for the first time films representing the Balinese at their daily tasks, are immediately struck by the slow tempo of their actions. If a man seated in one pavilion of his house-court suddenly wishes to show something which is in another pavilion, he will rise to his feet and saunter across the intervening space, quite as if he were going for a casual stroll. He will never hurry, as we would, eager to grasp the object which has come to mind. There is plenty of time, and to hurry would be unusual, unnecessary, and stupid—a waste of energy. Walking along the roads, each individual progresses with an even, measured step. The custom is to walk in single file, probably because the trails are narrow, and even today when the gravel covered motor roads are used for long distance walking, there is only a narrow track at the side which is comfortable to bare feet. Rarely does one individual walking in the single file pass another, for all go at the same rhythmic pace. This pace seems to be kept over long distances as well as short, and is hardly influenced when the walker carries a medium load (about forty pounds). Women carry such a load with facility, balanced on their heads. Men usually carry much heavier weights, divided in two parcels, one of which is slung at either end of a bamboo pole balanced on the shoulder. Invariably when the load is heavy (a hundred pounds or so) the man with the shoulder bar proceeds at a short run, almost a trot, and he keeps up this pace without ever slowing down to a walk. The idea is not to get there more quickly; but the motion of the trot vibrates the pliant shoulder-bar, so that the weights at either end swing up and down, thus relieving the pressure on the shoulder. This pace however has become customary to people heavily laden, and a woman bearing on her head one of the large offerings of rice, fruit, and cakes (often a cone four or five feet high) will proceed with the same accelerated steps that the men use under their heavy shoulder-bars.

A test of the evenness of the habitual pace, kept up over long distances, came on the occasion of an annual ceremony at a temple on the southernmost shore. A Balinese whose house stood next to

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that now things were getting worse, and that the place should by all means be purified by a great *metjaroe* ceremony, to drive away the demons and bad spirits who were growing bolder. Falling is a shock which upsets the nice balance of well-being, just as the feeling of a rush of blood to the head in an inverted position is uncomfortable, and must therefore be wrong.[2a] Fathers and grandfathers who hold their young children in their laps for hours at a time never swing them about nor cast them in the air as ours are apt to do. Men and women will always endeavor to keep their erect posture, their even pace, their absolute balance, regardless of obstacles in the way, and to cultivate this tendency in the child. White men who scamper down a hillside, in excess of good spirits and momentum, or who leap over a stream, will always evoke laughter in the Balinese who walks sedately on, stepping into the water as if it did not exist, so long as the even measure of his gait is not interrupted. Because his feet are bare and the water warm, there would seem to be no reason to exert himself to jump over the stream. If it were not that the Balinese never jump, one would say that their habits are only better adjusted than ours to a climate uniformly hot, where it is better to conserve one's energy for those exertions required in the daily work. But the systematic avoidance of all shocks and pains and disturbances of the circulation of the blood characteristic of all adult Balinese would indicate that a more specialized consciousness of the body is involved. And this theory is supported by the fact that the average Balinese, although he has plentiful supplies of distilled arak and palm-wine, does not like to get drunk. The feeling of confusion, the lack of his usual surefootedness and sense of equilibrium, are so unpleasant to him that he does not often risk the experience. And the whirling of the universe which precedes nausea is positively terrifying. Then he is indeed *lost*.

Malay people have a term for the sensation of being lost, *keliru*. In the Balinese language the word is *paling*. To be *paling*, they say, is "not to know where North is"; in other words, he is *paling* who has lost his sense of direction, or who has lost the sense of his own position in relation to the geography of his world. One man whom I knew was taken for a trip in a motor car. He fell asleep during the

[2a] The Balinese do not express in words the idea that to upset balance is wrong, but they do express it in their affective response. A look of pain, of fear, or of anxiety appears on the face of an adult who tumbles, or of a child who is held upside down, which far surpasses in feeling the response we should expect, and is comparable only to the responses called out by other "wrongs" against the social and religious laws.

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ride. When the car stopped, he awoke, and leaping out, looked about him desperately, crying, "Where's North, where's North? I'm *paling*."

So accustomed are the Balinese to know where they are in relation to the points of the compass that all instructions of direction are given in these terms, rather than in "right and left," or such designations as "towards me," "away from the wall," etc. The Balinese says "when you come to the cross-roads, take the turn to the West"; "pull the table southward"; "he passed me going North"—not "going towards the market"; even among musicians, "hit the key to the East of the one you are hitting." When for any reason this sense of direction is temporarily lost, when, as we phrase it, a man feels "turned around," he is not only uncomfortable but he is quite unable to function. We once sent a small boy of eight to a distant village where he was to learn to dance, living in the house of his teacher. Riding in the car, the child lost his sense of direction. When we visited him three days later, he had not begun his lessons, for he was still *paling*. "How can I tell him to turn to the East, to advance towards the North, when he is *paling*?" said the teacher. The boy was returned to his village, where, once on familiar ground, he found himself. After several days he went back to the house of the teacher, intently watching every curve of the winding road. But it was no good—he was again *paling*. He grew anxious, and was unable to eat and sleep. Then someone thought of taking him out into the fields, where he could see the high cone of the Goenoeng Agoeng, the highest mountain, rising to North. He was cured of his trouble on the spot, and had no recurrence of it during the six weeks of his stay in the village. He seemed happy there and made great progress with his dancing.[8]

As a rule the small children are not bothered with the responsibility of direction, for they play within the circumscribed limits of the particular *bandjar* (division of the village) which is theirs, or in the outlying rice-fields. On this ground they are at home. When they visit other villages they go in the company of their parents or near relatives, an older brother or cousin, who knows the way. But their

[8] It is probable that an important factor in what we know as homesickness is the dislocation of the sense of direction in unfamiliar surroundings. In the life of the civilized being, who continually moves about and changes the habitual interior from which he orients himself, this sense must be seriously disturbed. Wild animals seem to be perfectly oriented. And domesticated animals manifest uneasiness and make definite attempts to orient themselves, or to return to familiar surroundings, when they are removed from one place to another.

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The feeling of modesty—no other words seems to apply—attached to eating does not apply to drinking, and anyone will drink anywhere, without making a fuss about it. Similarly no shame is felt for urinating, which is done by both men and women along the public roads, in the open fields, anywhere except within the housecourt or on holy ground. But for defecating the people retire to relative privacy, "where the pigs are," out of sight. The many pigs and dogs act as scavengers, and may be relied upon to do away with all the filth.

Where there are gushing springs, bathing places are constructed, with walls dividing off the place of the women from that of the men. When the rivers are used for bathing, the sexes divide into groups, the men taking the upstream position, the women the downstream. But within each group modesty is shown, and the genitals may not be exposed even to a member of the same sex. The men cover themselves with one hand, the women lift their skirts gradually, and suddenly plunge waist deep in the water. Dressing and undressing may be done in public by both men and women, for their clothes are of such a nature that they can be changed without immodesty.*

## Manifestations of the Emotional Life

The Balinese are universally afraid in the dark, and the fear of *léjaks*, living male and female sorcerers in supernatural form, is intensified between the hours of midnight and dawn, when these creatures are supposed to roam. Even grown boys and men will not visit at night unholy places such as the graveyard, the crossroads, certain trees and bridges where supernatural manifestations are frequent. They are afraid to walk along the dark village streets at night, unless accompanied, but if a man must go alone he sings in a loud voice to frighten away the *léjaks*, or to keep his spirits up. His housecourt is his haven. The encircling clay walls, the high ceremonial entrance gate, and the magic strip of wall immediately within this gate (to block the path of evil spirits) give him a feeling a security, sleeping upon the open pavilions. But he prefers not to sleep alone. If he has passed the age when he wishes to sleep next his wife, he will take one or two of his little sons to bed with him. Small children sleep with their parents, grandparents, or huddle in a group together.

* For the breasts, of course, the women show no modesty at all. It is only the region from the knees to the waist which must never be exposed. The Balinese feel about exposure of the thighs of women as Westerners feel about their breasts, and a woman in a Western bathing suit is extremely shocking to them for that reason.

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a group together. When a group of men who are strangers are passing through a village, they may take shelter for the night in the men's communal pavilion which stands by the roadside—an unprotected place. They curl up as close as possible to each other, like young puppies, the body of one curving around that of his neighbor, with often an arm or a leg thrown over him. A group may be so compact that if one turns over the whole group must turn. The language contains terms for light and heavy sleepers, but as a rule they sleep soundly and are hard to rouse. They are afraid to awaken each other, lest the soul of the sleeper be wandering. But the taboo seems to imply more danger to the one doing the awakening than the one awakened, for a boy who says "I do not dare to wake him" will show no objection if a foreigner takes upon himself the responsibility of awakening one of his fellows.

As has been mentioned, a man may not touch a woman, even his wife, before others. He may not touch a woman's clothes, nor should his clothes touch hers, as, for instance, in a trunk. If it is necessary to pack them together, the man's clothes must be on top. But in the privacy supplied by darkness the taboos are lifted. Lovers and married people may caress each other freely. Favorite caresses are the *tjioem*, the affectionate or passionate "sniff" which replaces our kiss, and the *saling ngaras*, "exchange of strokings," a term applied to the rubbing of cheek on cheek, both slowly turning their heads from side to side, so that the lips do come into play as they brush past each other. Love-scenes depicted in the paintings, and described in the literature, suggest that many of the refinements of the art of love which belong to Hindu tradition have been taken over by the Balinese. But for reasons of their own, which have already been made sufficiently clear, the Balinese do not use the reversed posture, nor may the woman be above. In sexual play only the left hand may be used, since the right is used for eating.

A woman is popularly supposed to have within her a *manik*. The term *manik* is applied to jewels, and to a sprite which sits in coconut trees, and is pursued by Kilap Krêbèk Geroedoêg, Thunder-and-Lightning, who, when he catches the *manik*, causes the coconut tree to be burnt up. But the *manik* in a woman is of a different sort. In sexual intercourse her *manik* is repeatedly "hit," and this contact causes it to become larger and larger until it becomes a child. After the birth of the child, she gets a new *manik*. It is possible, though by no means sure, that the Balinese conceive orgasm of both man

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many hundreds of years static, it has been possible for these laws to grow up, to be sifted and tested over a long period, until they have reached a code eminently suitable to the people whom they govern. For this reason it becomes easy for the child to take over the ways of his elders—the more forcibly impressed upon him because of the weight of tradition behind them, and the fear of transgressing the laws which have been shown by experience to be acceptable to the ever-present gods and demons. Actually the child is afforded no choice at all under the sanction of the community. He has only to obey the prescriptions of tradition to become an adult happily adjusted to the life which is his. And if the child is a girl, she begins very early to feel how her rôle is differentiated from that of a boy. The women accept without rancor the rôle of an inferior. It is simply that they have their being on a different plane from the men. In a society with so many stratifications, that of age within the family, of rank and of relative wealth as between families, the place of woman as an inferior is not seen as a hardship. The system of stratification works smoothly, as a rule, and all those individuals who conform to it seem happy. It is a part of the very order which gives to the life of the Balinese its stability.

### When the Rules May Be Broken

The Balinese way of life even provides an organized release from the rigid code, times when individuals who feel the need of it may break almost all the rules of decorum. These are the occasions of intense and fevered group activity. There is no space here to describe these manifestations in detail, and a few examples of what I mean must suffice. In the prolonged and enthusiastic rehearsals of musicians, actors, and dancers, when all work together in a group, no attention is paid to relative rank, and a performer of noble birth takes his place in equality with the group—he sits on a level with his social inferiors, and bows to their will in matters of artistic production, if their talent be superior to his. At communal feasts men who are accustomed to eating in private gather in groups to partake of the unusual viands and delicacies which they have prepared. Here the taboos do not quite break down, for although they regale themselves with relish, no conversation is allowed between the members feasting together. At the celebration of cremations, several hundred men together cast off their habitual carefully poised bearing, and taking up the body of their friend, or the tower which is to convey

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him to the cremation place, they shout, they leap, they lift their arms in threatening gestures, they whirl around and around in a mass of vigorously stamping, kicking, and entangled limbs, falling down, trampling upon their fellows, hurling themselves into a pool of mud and besplattering each other with howls of glee. Again, a group of villagers wishing to divine the will of the gods goes into trance—tears stream down the face of a young girl, a woman sobs hysterically, an old man trembles as in an ague, a youth with rolling eyes and thrashing limbs tries to force burning coals into his mouth. Or in a ceremony for the propitiation of the King of Demons, in the form of a grotesque figure of a lion, a group of men and boys clusters about, shouting, prancing, pressing with all the strength of both arms the point of a kris into their own naked chests. One holds the handle of the weapon on the ground, with the point upward, and hurls his body upon it, throwing both feet in the air so that he will strike with all his weight. The term *riboet*, a Malay word meaning "storm," is applied to a group in such an excited state. Acting under the powerful stimulus of mass-emotion, each man forgets to be cautious, to be dignified, to be afraid. The minor fears of pain and bodily disturbance are for the time forgotten. When the frenzy is carried to the pitch of trance, the Balinese is to a great extent in a state of anaesthesia, able to dance upon hot coals or to wound himself with a dagger (although they themselves say that if the trance is sufficiently deep the flesh will resist the dagger and no wound will be sustained). But even without trance, every individual who participates in the excitement is free to break the rules without experiencing fear or shame for his unusual behavior. He is secure in the consciousness that he is one of many, that the crowd moves as he does.

It has seemed necessary to mention, however briefly, these forms of activity which are in sharp contrast to the slow deliberate tempo, the quiet dignity and balanced equilibrium of the habitual movements. For the Balinese at their daily tasks lead a life of reserved, steady—almost plodding—application to hard labor, made easier by the absolute lack of tension or of any pressure from the sense of time, and by the rhythmic flow of their motions interspersed with suitable periods of rest. But this existence, they say, is dull and lonely without festivals and celebrations. Luckily their religion provides many occasions for celebration, and at these times the people burst forth in a riot of true *fun*, when all together they adorn them-

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selves, they take part with enthusiasm in the elaborate preparation of offerings and the decoration of the temples, they enjoy to the utmost presentations of dancing, music, and drama, which the religion prescribes. It is significant that the audience for these presentations takes as much delight in them as the performers. Their own arts are to them completely satisfying, a fulfillment in the life of the people for whom they have been evolved. At such festivals one is impressed by the joyousness, the gayety with which the Balinese seem carried away. And just as these joyous occasions punctuate the dreary round of everyday life, so do the occasions of wild frenzy break into it, affording the individual a necessary release. If it were not for these organized departures from the habitual tempo, it would not be possible for the individual to conform, at all other times, to the rigid order of behavior which is exacted from him. And therefore we must recognize the two aspects, the quiet, relaxed, and peaceful tenor of the private life, and the intense and spontaneous exaltation of group activity, both of which are essential to the Balinese temper.

### Interpretation

In conclusion, perhaps it will be well to stress once more the ease and relaxation in the ordinary behavior of the Balinese, so that an impression will not be left that any strain is caused by need to maintain a balanced equilibrium and a perfect orientation in social and geographical respects. On the contrary, the rules by which they abide seem to supply a simplication of behavior. For the Balinese life is divided into two phases quite opposed to those of the modern city dweller in our world; the Balinese works in relaxation, and in his pleasure finds intense stimulation, whereas our city dweller works under a strain of intense stimulation, and for his pleasure seeks relaxation. If there should be any doubt of the difference in tension between the two psychological types, let us imagine how the city dweller would react to certain conditions in Balinese life, as, for instance, living in a courtyard shared by ten or fifteen members of his immediate family, divided only by pavilions without walls; or sleeping in such close proximity as has been described, with a number of others; or enjoying a dramatic performance lasting for eight or nine hours, crouched in a press of bodies comparable only to one of our subway jams. These things do not offend nor put any strain upon the Balinese, because of the relaxation of his mood. Likewise

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he is able to wait for long periods without showing impatience, and to accept with composure frustration of his plans, saying simply, "It did not happen." It may be said that the agricultural way of life, requiring suitable physical exertion, and producing in a direct way the food supply, so that there may be no anxiety about it for anyone, contributes to the mental poise of the people; also that the children are surrounded with affection, and given very early a part in the work of the family group, so that they grow up feeling beloved and useful, which gives to them as individuals a sense of security. And because the rules for orientation, posture, facial expression, speech, and so forth are so universally accepted, they soon become habitual, and are carried out automatically by the people without any conscious application, without any of the strain which they would cause to us. The immutability of all the laws of conduct relieves the individual of any responsibility except that of obeying them. He does not doubt their rightness, since they have always been so. And since they are his habits, he does not have even to think of them. Beyond this, his only cares are specific misfortunes, which may always occur, but which he considers outside his power to control. Illness, flood, and famine, these are signs of the anger of the gods, and of the dominance, for the time, of the forces of evil. The religious concepts make the cause clear, and they supply, too, the remedy. Offerings must be prepared, purifications and celebrations carried out, for the propitiation of the demons and the glorification of the gods. Although it may seem to us that the Balinese lives in ever present fear of demons and of evil spirits, the strain is actually not great because the remedy is known and prescribed. Even in some cases charged with much superstitious fear, such as the birth of unlucky twins or the occurrence of certain forms of incest, when the entire village is rendered unclean, tradition takes care of the wrong by requiring temporary banishment of the offenders and elaborate purification rituals. In this way the burden of responsibility is lifted from the offenders and their fellow-villagers who are affected. Tradition tells them what to do in compensation for the wrong. When it is done, no weight of sin or guilt rests on the individual. He has in such matters, as in all other aspects of his life, no choice, no decisions to be made, only the responsibility to maintain the order which he and his society consider established and proved. To judge how suitable and how desirable is such an order,